



**Pannier Market and Butchers Hall**

## **Section 2.0 Identifying the area's needs**

Since the decision by the HLF on Tavistock's Stage I Bid, the Development Grant has been used to review the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and CA Management Plan, to develop a Public Realm Strategy and to develop Complementary Initiatives to support the aims and objectives agreed for Tavistock's THI. The evidence which supported the Stage 1 application has been revisited and brought up to date,

### **2.1 Social and economic conditions**

The Tavistock Market Town Area (TMTA) which covers half of the Borough of West Devon has the following socio-economic characteristics –

- Suffers from depressed economic productivity and is forecast to have relatively poor economic performance over the next ten years, compared to other parts of Devon and nationally;

## Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme

- Is likely to be disproportionately affected by public sector cuts as a result of relative dependence on Plymouth both as an employment location and as a market for goods and services;
- Is marked by a poorly diversified business stock that leaves it vulnerable to economic downturns;
- Results in relatively low confidence within the business community, with both turnover and profits expected to decrease over the next year for a higher proportion of businesses in the TMTA than in the wider joint West Devon and South Hams Local Authority Areas;
- Is experiencing a decline in tourism which is an important sector for the TMTA while its retail sector is also beginning to show clear signs of vulnerability and decline;
- Is characterised by relatively high levels of economic inactivity and higher than average levels of long term unemployment, masked by headline figures of low unemployment;
- Exhibits low income levels and the ratio of these to house prices is extremely high;
- Is characterised by substantial conservation deficits in relation to the commercial property market that act as a constraint on owner investment. And this issue is compounded by poor rental returns and impaired yields;
- Has a high proportion of older people (of both economically active and retired age), leading to imbalances in the workforce and pressures on the local economy;
- Has pockets of acute and multiple deprivation; and
- When analysed by age, is marked by education and skills levels which point to worrying gaps at all levels of attainment within the younger demographic cohorts.

The “Case for Intervention” attached as Appendix 6 was included in the Stage One submission but is still relevant and gives full detail and quotes the relevant statistics which demonstrate Tavistock’s urgent need for economic regeneration.

The key statistics in the report were:

GVA (productivity) was only 67% of the National and 82% of the Devon average.

Economic activity rates (for 16-64 year olds) were over 29% compared to 24% nationally.

The ratio of annual wages to house prices is 1:8.2 was above the national and SW averages.

Of the 7 LSOAs (local output areas) for Tavistock, one is in the bottom quartile for living environment and another is in the bottom quartile for employment; 8 out of 11 of the wider TMTA LSOAs are in the bottom quartile for access to housing.

23% of those claiming JSA in Tavistock have been unemployed for over 12 months compared to 18% across Devon.

Since its inception Tavistock Foodbank had helped 130 families in 6 months

Tourism data showed a drop in bookings of 8%

15% of businesses have no growth plans and a further 36% expect to remain stagnant.

A survey of town centre businesses had painted a powerful picture of difficult trading conditions and fragile confidence with nearly half of the businesses expecting turnover to decline over the next financial year and all but one of the remaining businesses expecting turnover to be static.

Business confidence was low, with half of the businesses expecting trading conditions to worsen in the short term, and the other half simply unsure. In addition, looking over the next 3 trading years, confidence was predicted to improve but only slowly, with less than a quarter believing trading conditions will improve over the medium term.

The overall picture then is one of fragile commercial health, with revenues flat. In these circumstances, and with the compounding factor of short and medium term uncertainty, ongoing business investment will likely remain low. But this is as much an opportunity as it is a weakness, suggesting that regeneration interventions at even a modest scale could tip the balance for the town's traders, stimulating investment alongside improved sales.

Over the past year enquiries and bookings through the Tavistock TIC indicate a significant upturn in visitors to the town by approximately 25% following a particularly poor year in 2013/13 during which booking value reached an all time low of £12,000 – compared to £20,000 in the previous year.

The number of JSA claimants has decreased nationally and the situation in West Devon has improved significantly during 2012/13.

However the disparity between local income levels and house prices has got worse. The UK figure was 1:6.74, compared to 1:8.69 for Devon and 1:9.32 for West Devon. (Source CLG 2012).

West Devon Borough Council conducted a survey of businesses in the BID Co. area in November 2013 (before the decision to grant Planning Permission for the Tesco development on the edge of the town) which showed the following:

Of the 36 businesses (mostly independent traders) surveyed, 33% saw an increase in turnover in the past 12 months; 28% stayed the same and 31% saw a decrease.

In terms of profitability, 31% saw an increase: only 19% stayed the same and for 44% it decreased.

In terms of future prospects only 42% expected things to get better in the next 12 months; 25% said it would stay the same and 28% said they expected it to get worse.

The food bank continues to experience high demand with 468 families being assisted over the last 18 months.

## **2.2 The Conservation Area**

Tavistock retains a townscape of great interest because of its spacious streets, attractive town centre squares and prestigious 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, many of which were built out of the local greeny grey Hurdwick stone. The town's importance derives from its history – as the site of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Benedictine Abbey; its role as a Market and Stannary Town and its place at the gateway to both the Dartmoor National Park and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site. These give it not only local and national significance, but international importance as well.

The Tavistock Conservation Area was initially designated in 1972, extended in 1995 and then again in 2009 following the publication and adoption of the Tavistock Conservation Area Appraisal. Copies of the Character Appraisal and the accompanying Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan were provided with the Stage 1 application. Since then, both documents have been reviewed and updated following the public consultation detailed at 3.6 below. Copies of the revised Appraisal and Management Plan are provided at Appendix 7 and 8.

The conservation area designation includes almost all of the area within the town that forms part of the World Heritage Site. While this enhances the status of the Conservation Area and the town, it also places a further burden on property owners and local authorities to take account of the “Outstanding Universal Value” of the town’s mining heritage and ensure that any development respects that designation.

Tavistock is not, however, a museum. In addition to its Conservation Area and World Heritage Site status, it is the principal market town in the Borough of West Devon with a commercial heart that is the main driver of the local economy.

The THI area, which is wholly within the designated Conservation Area, focuses on the business centre of the town in order to concentrate investment and provide exemplars for the future management of the town. This area of concentration includes the town centre’s most important historic buildings and the parts that are most vulnerable to further economic downturn or stagnation.

### **2.3 Assessing the heritage need**

Despite the superficial appearance of a thriving town centre, Tavistock does suffer from the social and economic conditions set out in Section 2.1 above and in the Case for Intervention (Appendix 6). The physical consequences are noted in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal in Section 7 – *Issues* (Appendix 7).

At the centre, there are fundamental problems of long-standing with the roof and drainage of the Pannier Market and in the condition of associated buildings to the southeast, such as the Butchers’ Hall. The most recent use of the Butchers’ Hall as an auction room has failed to provide for adequate maintenance and its current vacancy represents a major regeneration opportunity for Tavistock. The vacancy of the Guildhall and Police Station add a further opportunity to enhance the group value of the civic buildings at the heart of the town.

Parts of the town adjacent to the centre, most particularly Market Street, King Street and parts of West Street, contain vacant buildings, some of which are listed. A number of charity shops, empty shops or shops which have recently closed are also evident. This, coupled with the poor condition of the public realm, has resulted in an area of neglected buildings characterised by poor quality shopfronts, peeling paintwork, high level decay and short-term ‘fixes’. The secondary nature of this area and its fragile economy are clearly the causes of lost incentives to invest in maintenance.

For the Stage 1 application, a rapid assessment was made of all the buildings in the THI area and priorities were established on the basis of condition, use/vacancy, historical significance and townscape prominence. This resulted in the list of projects put forward at Stage 1, which remains largely the same. The exceptions are No.3 King Street, where the owner does not wish to take up

grant assistance, and the Guildhall for which separate funding is being sought in parallel with the THI.

Since the Stage 1 pass, surveys have been undertaken of all the target buildings – critical and priority – and schedules of eligible repairs have been drawn up. These are summarised in the Gazetteer provided at Appendix 9. Repair schedules have also been prepared for a reserve list which comprises those properties within the THI area that were identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as positive. ('Positive' buildings are either listed buildings or undesignated heritage assets that make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area).

While the repair schedules have been drawn up by a conservation-accredited surveyor, it should be noted that they are not full specifications. Owners will, therefore, be expected to develop the details further as the basis for individual grant applications.

The project development for Stage 2 has also addressed the public realm issues. Specialist landscape designers were commissioned to prepare a Public Realm Strategy for Tavistock. Central to this was the examination of priority projects for the environs of the Pannier Market, Guildhall Square and Market Street/Bank Square. Options were developed through two public workshops and were considered in the public consultation detailed at 3.6 below. On the basis of public opinion, the limited funding available through the THI will be directed to improvements at the Pannier Market and Guildhall Square. Details of these works are provided in the Public Realm Strategy at Appendix 10.

### **2.4 Assessing the financial need**

Eligible works identified in the repair schedules have been costed by the same conservation-accredited surveyor. Costs are shown against each item in the schedules for each building in the Gazetteer (Appendix 9). Additional allowances are also identified for preliminaries, professional fees, structural engineering, CDM-C, contingencies and VAT. Clearly, these additional costs present a 'worst case' and in some cases savings may be possible, for instance where VAT is recoverable. Any accumulation of savings would allow a further project to be brought forward from the reserve list.

Two projects are regarded as critical to the success of the THI. These are the Pannier Market and the Butchers Hall, because they are so central to the economic heart of the town. They also have high visibility and a clear commitment from the owners (TTC) to proceed with a grant application. A further ten properties, including the Police Station and Guildhall, have been assessed against three criteria to establish their order of importance to the scheme. These criteria are:

- Visibility within the townscape
- Willingness of the owner to participate
- Overall impact

Figure 4: Priority Projects Assessment

Project	Visibility	Willingness	Impact	Total
Guildhall	3	3	3	9
2 Market Street	3	2	3	8
3 Market Street	3	3	2	8
1 Church Lane (Foulston's)	3	2	3	8
81 West Street	3	2	2	7
9 West Street	3	2	2	7
10 West Street	3	2	2	7
6 King Street	2	2	2	6
76 West Street	2	2	2	6
Kingdon House	2	3	1	6
3 King Street	2	1	2	5

(Note: 1 = Low, 2 = Average, 3 = High)

A separate application to the HLF's Regional Grants Panel has now been submitted by the Town Council in respect of a £1.5 million project to bring the Police Station and Guildhall back into public use, including creating A Gateway Centre for the World Heritage Site hence the following list of priority projects has been established for the remaining 9 properties:-

1. 2 Market Street
2. 3 Market Street
3. 1 Church Lane (Foulston's)
4. 81 West Street
5. 9 West Street
6. 10 West Street
7. 6 King Street
8. 76 West Street
9. Kingdon House, Pym Street

In a normal market, the incentive to undertake repairs is provided by a commensurate uplift in value. However, where the uplift is not sufficient to cover the investment in repairs, there is a 'heritage deficit' that can be made up by grant assistance.

Valuations were carried out by DVS, the commercial arm of the Valuation Office Agency, in respect of eight buildings. In each case, the valuation exercise compared the value of the building in its current condition with the estimated value assuming completion of the works detailed in the repair schedules.

For the two Critical Projects, investment in repairs would make no difference to the valuations which remain constant at £950,000 (Pannier Market) and £180,000 (Butchers' Hall). The other six valuations are for properties on the priority list above. In each case, the uplift in value is considerably lower than the investment in repairs. This demonstrates the market failure, which

gives little or no incentive to undertake repairs, and it provides the justification for public intervention.

The valuations are considered further in Section 4.6 where they are used to establish grant rates for the scheme taking account of the relative incentives needed to carry out basic repairs and to support historically accurate reinstatement.

## **2.5 Clawback**

All grants made under the THI will be subject to a 'clawback' provision and this will be clearly set out in the conditions of contract attached to grant offers.

The purpose of clawback is to ensure that owners do not profit from grant aided work. Consideration is therefore given to whether the cost of the works should be recouped if the building is sold.

In accordance with THI guidance, 'clawback' will be calculated on the basis of the increased value above that anticipated for the purpose of the original grant.

The following time scales will apply:

- Grants up to £25,000 – Clawback will be considered for sales within 3 years.
- Grants above £25,000 – Clawback will be considered for sales within 10 years

All grants offered will automatically be registered as a Land Charge against the property by the Accountable Body.

It is recognised that the potential repayment of grant following the sale of a property which has previously been awarded grant aid can often be a severe impediment when attempting to encourage owners to agree to a scheme. It is important to establish at the outset that in many cases, the grant will not have to be repaid.

At the time of the sale, grantees will be asked to submit the amount for which the building is being sold, together with an independent valuation of the building in the condition it was before the grant aided work was carried out (the council will provide the repair specifications and photographs of the building prior to the work being carried out). A clawback will only be implemented if the sale price exceeds the valuation of the building in its original condition added to the cost of the repairs carried out with the grant. Any further works undertaken outside the scope of the THI and any effects of inflation will also be taken into account.

## 2.6 Eligible projects

The process to determine which properties would be eligible began with the Conservation Area Appraisal which noted areas of particular concern based on building condition and the potential for enhancement. Survey work for the Stage 1 application, and consultation with the Steering Group, refined those concerns by identifying an area of concentration within the Conservation Area on which the THI should focus. By limiting the THI area, the effect of investment would be more apparent so that benchmark standards could be set for the Conservation Area as a whole.

Within the THI area, the process for assessing heritage need and financial need are detailed in Sections 2.3 and 2.4 above.

Figure 5 List of Eligible THI Projects

### CRITICAL

1. Pannier Market                      £502,460  
Repairs, restoration of historic features, in particular the replacement of the roof and wet weather goods.
2. Butcher's Hall                      £339,682  
Repairs and renovation, including re-roofing and creation of additional commercial floorspace.

### PRIORITY

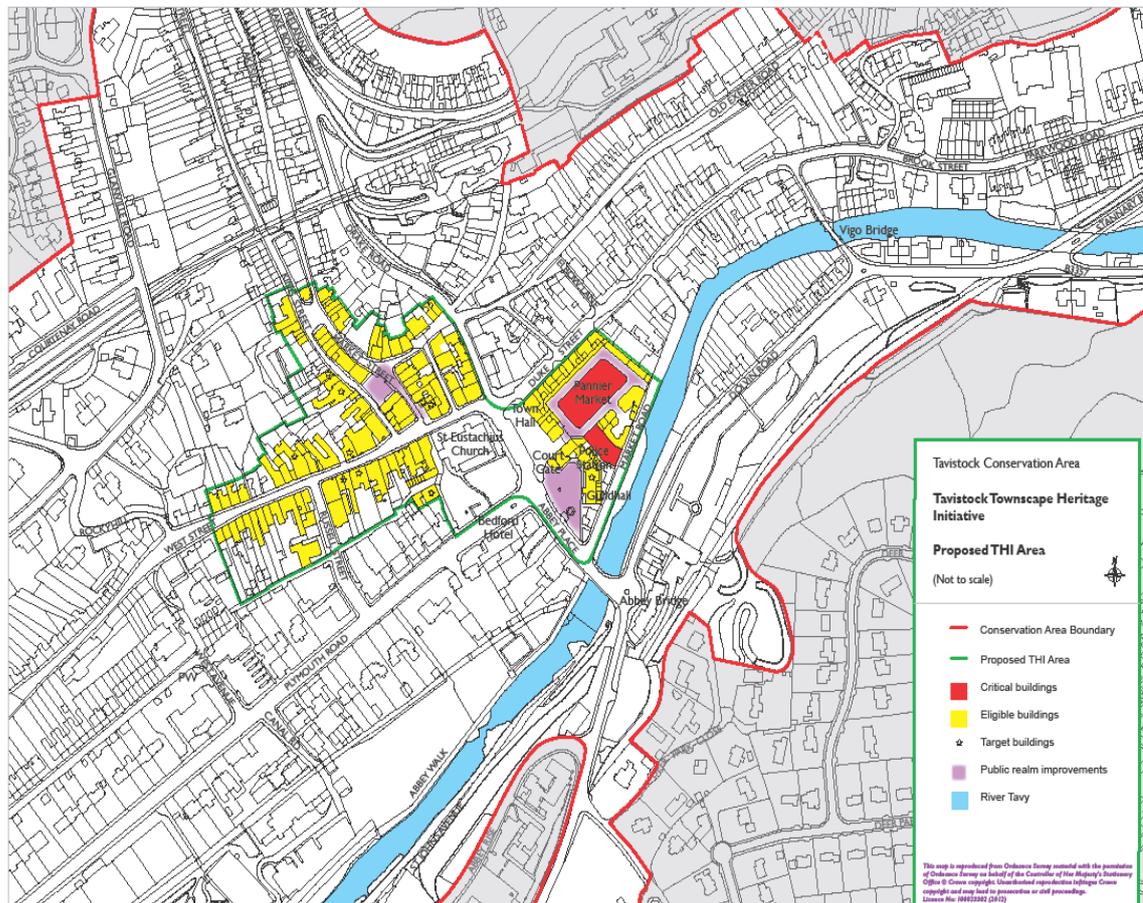
3. 2 Market Street                      £87,685  
Timber frame repairs, roofing and slate hangings.
4. 3 Market Street                      £33,187  
Timber frame repairs, roofing and slate hangings.
5. 1 Church Lane                      £148,456  
Reinstatement of details on this important property.
6. 81 West Street                      £93,016  
Roofing, external joinery and refurbishment of upper floors.
7. 9 West Street                      £43,967  
Roofing, external joinery and refurbishment of upper floors.
8. 10 West Street                      £42,885  
Roofing, external joinery and refurbishment of upper floors.
9. 6 King Street                      £44,121  
Roofing, external joinery and refurbishment of upper floors.
10. 76 West Street                      £49,910  
Repairs to rear.
11. Kingdon House, Pym Street      £49,682  
Roofing, repairs to rainwater goods and windows.

## Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme

### RESERVE

Guildhall	£144,174
3 King Street	£55,825
5 Market Street	£33,271
Masonic Hall, Pym Street	£25,260
2&3 Drake Road	£14,633
27 King Street	£58,872
2 King Street	£43,486
3 Pym Street	£26,366
1&2 Bedford Square	£55,545
4&6 North Street	£39,004
18 West Street	£19,331
19 West Street	£29,847
20 West Street	£27,683
21 West Street	£29,235
22-23 West Street	£42,236
24 West Street	£23,854
25 West Street	£32,600
67 West Street	£27,001
69 West Street	£50,060
70 West Street	£33,747
72 West Street	£46,383
73 West Street	£84,834

The outcome is that the two Critical Projects remain the same as they were at Stage 1 and there are nine further Priority Projects. These are identified on the plan in Figure 6 and details are provided in the Gazetteer at Appendix 9. In addition, there are some 20 Reserve Projects that form a pool from which cases can be brought forward should funding become available.



**Figure 6 Map of the THI Area**

It is not the intention to provide THI support for enhancing the standard of new development in gap sites.

The process of community involvement in selecting public realm enhancements as an element of the THI is described in Section at 2.3 above.

Complementary initiatives form an important part of this THI. They will ensure community ‘buy-in’ to the scheme and provide a legacy for the project that goes beyond physical works. These initiatives are detailed in the Action Plan at Section 4.4 below.